

## Gratefulness is a Great Gift for Kids

The holiday season is here and kids are making their lists for Santa, but there's one gift that all children should receive and that's gratefulness. Carolyn Fair, a nationally recognized trainer/consultant for Nurturing Parenting Programs and certified facilitator of the "Ten Greatest Gifts We Give Our Children", tells us how we can give our children a great gift that won't cost you anything.

Fair explains that "The Ten Greatest Gifts We Give Our Children" is about teaching parents tools to raise their children to be responsible healthy adults by giving them qualities and values that we call gifts. These gifts can be anything you want your kids to have – love, kindness, compassion, self-esteem, integrity, responsibility, patience, tolerance, knowledge, wisdom and gratefulness. These aren't gifts you can buy, yet they are more valuable than anything you can get in a store. Years from now, your children may not remember the toys they get this year, but they will remember the gifts of love and time you shared with them.

This is the season of Thanksgiving and our children need to learn why it's important to be grateful for what they have. Everyone needs to feel like they are appreciated. Fair says that children are born takers. They have to learn to be givers and to be appreciative for the things they receive. That's why we need to teach our kids to look and think beyond themselves. As parents, it's our responsibility to teach our kids that there are people in the world who are less fortunate than we are. It's our job to show our children how fortunate they are with the hope that it will inspire them to help others who have real needs. No matter what your circumstances may be, you can always find someone else who has it worse off than you.

Fair shared some ways that parents can teach their children how to be grateful, like volunteering with your kids. Get your kids involved with things that you have a passion for so they can see you giving back and how that makes a difference in someone else's life. Teach them to tithe or give an offering at church. Instead of focusing on what toys they want to receive this holiday, encourage your kids to donate some of their gently, used toys to charity. Ask them to draw pictures or write thank you notes to people who give them gifts. Fair stressed that teaching your kids how to be grateful is not a one-time lesson, but an ongoing process that needs to be reinforced as the child matures.